



Maricopa County

News Release

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Flu vaccine shortage – not an emergency

(Phoenix) – With the announcement of Chiron, Corp. not being able to distribute their flu vaccines for the 2004-2005 flu season, Maricopa County Public Health officials say that while the situation is unfortunate, it is not an emergency.

“Public Health and other health care leaders are working with our community partners to ensure the health and safety of our residents,” said Dr. Robert D. Jones, M.D., Director for the Bio-Defense Preparedness and Response Division of Public Health.

Those people most vulnerable to the flu are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated this season. High risk individuals include infants ages 6 to 23 months and those over the age of 65. Other high risk people include anyone with heart failure, respiratory failure, kidney failure, children age 2 to 18 years on chronic aspirin treatment, women pregnant during the flu season, healthcare workers who provide direct patient care and daycare workers who work with infants.

Infants will not be affected by the shortage as Aventis is the only producer of the infant flu vaccine.

“What is important to remember is that it is not the number of doses available, but that the vaccine gets to those most at risk,” Jones said.

Residents are asked to help Public Health manage this situation by taking the other precautions necessary to minimize your and your family’s chances of contracting the flu this season. Please cover your cough, wash your hands, stay at home if you’re ill, and remember do not rush out to get the flu shot if you are not at high risk.

If you are at high risk for getting the flu call Community Information & Referral Services at 602-263-8856 or www.findaflushot.com for flu shot locations and information.

For further information regarding the flu go to www.maricopa.gov/flu.

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